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Loaned by Gertrude Stein

The Bronx Zoo

The other day I went to the Bronx Zoological Park, happy, and with the idea chirping in my mind that it would be interesting to get photographs of the animals. The camera has a vast deal to say of interest to the public regarding these animals, I thought. I found that a camera is not allowed inside the grounds. This did not seem altogether unjust, on second thoughts. I applied to Mr. Hornaday, whom I admire for his "vitriolic," well-expressed and charming hatred of the sparrows, for his vertical division of Passeres down to Impennes, thus placing these difficult orders within instant grasp of the uninitiated, above all for his finely-conceived scheme of a Natural History.

I very much wanted a photograph of the Indian rhinoceros' head, of this head in a certain position if possible, a head more powerful than the conception of the Minotaur. I placed, mentally, Watts-George's conception of the Minotaur by the side of this rhinoceros and Watts-George fell down, quite inarticulately. I was astonished. Here's mythology in the flesh, I thought. The admirable iron-bound corrugations on the neck of this august brute, the girlish, tender, soft-blooded quasi-red behind the ears, the mean eyes, close and bloodshot, were not to be spat upon from an aesthetic angle. sought Mr. Hornaday and was directed to a building where all the photographs were. There a young lady showed me a picture of an elephant on the ground tied down to four stakes, a dentist in the neighborhood of his tusks, and the title underneath, "What we do to a bad patient." Yet thousands of intelligent people love animals in this city. I asked for the head and was shown another elephant, his fore-legs on the steps of a restaurant, and a title something like, "Begging for his dinner." Quite touching, in fact. I saw the head, but the man who took the picture had not seen the corrugations, nor the formidable neck, consequently they were not in the picture, and this rhinoceros was recognizable only as a member of his tribe. I came away. After all, my purpose was educational, in a modest way.

J. B.